



SOILS REPORTS – BUILDING DIVISION POLICY 2013 CBC

PLANNING & BUILDING DEPARTMENT • COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO
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SOILS INVESTIGATION REQUIRED

Provisions of Chapter 18 in the 2013 California Building Code require that the owner or applicant SHALL SUBMIT A FULL FOUNDATION AND SOILS INVESTIGATION to the Planning and Building Department for all new construction. These investigations shall be performed by an APPROVED civil engineer professionally licensed by the State of California to perform these services.

EXCEPTIONS TO THE RULE:

Exception A* For structures that are designed by a California registered Architect or Engineer:

The building official shall be permitted to waive the requirement for a geotechnical investigation where satisfactory data from adjacent areas is available that demonstrates an investigation is not necessary for any of the conditions in Sections 1803.5.1 through 1803.5.6 and Sections 1803.5.10 and 1803.5.11.

1. A California licensed engineer (not architect) shall submit findings with justification in writing along with the professional engineer's sealed and signed engineering documentation. Expansion index is the minimum requirement unless waived by the inspector at site inspection.

Exception B*

Geotechnical reports are not required for one-story, wood-frame and light-steel-frame buildings of Type V construction and 4,000 square feet (371 m²) or less in floor area, not located within Earthquake Fault Zones or Seismic Hazard Zones as shown in the most recently published maps from the California Geological Survey (CGS).

*** Exception B requires a minimum of an expansion index test by soils lab (unless waived by building official for additions up to 250 SF and detached non-habitable residential accessory structures up to 600 SF, which assume high expansive soil). Foundations shall comply with building division's foundation design requirements in expansive soils. Pre-moisture test for other than non-expansive soils are required to be verified by the soils lab.*

Manufactured / factory built homes

Based upon a site investigation by the building division, a soils report and/or expansive index soils test may be required for manufactured and factory built homes.

*** FOOTNOTES to the above exceptions A and B above:**

NOTE #1 If the project meets **Exceptions A or B**, the applicant is still obligated to address any unforeseen soils testing as a result of the SITE CHECK REVIEW by the building inspector. Expansion index is the minimum requirement unless waived by the inspector at site inspection.

NOTE #2 If the project is subject to any of the following conditions, **Exceptions A or B** do not apply:

- a. Located within a known GSA (Geologic Study Area) Land Use Designation.
- b. Located within a known liquefaction area (as designated by the County Geologist or other knowledge the County Department of Planning and Building may have).
- c. Located on a cut/fill, over-excavation re-compacted pad or fill pad.
- d. Located in a flood zone or a high ground water area.
- e. Located in any other hazardous area as determined by the building official.